

DEPARTMENT OF BENEFIT PAYMENTS

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 445-2077



October 24, 1975

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 75-229

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: ATTACHED COUNTY QUESTIONNAIRE

REFERENCE:

Since my appointment as Director of the Department of Benefit Payments and subsequent discussions with many of you, I have become aware there is a need to upgrade services that Benefit Payments provides to county welfare departments. Many of you have expressed to me constructive criticism concerning the performance of this Department. As a result, I have committed myself to a study of Benefit Payments and county relationships. Therefore, I am requesting input from all county welfare directors in order to assess how well the Department of Benefit Payments is complementing county welfare operations. Enclosed is a questionnaire that I have prepared in which I am soliciting your candid comments with regard to the preceding.

I know that your departments are the target of interminable requests for studies, surveys, questionnaires, reports, etc. However, I am sure you will agree with me that I need your input to direct my efforts toward improving the quality of services that Benefit Payments provides to county welfare departments.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this process. An early response to the above request will be greatly appreciated. I look forward to sharing with you the results of this study when it is completed.

Sincerely,

Marion J. Woods
MARION J. WOODS
Director

OBSOLETE

Superseded by ACL 77-15

Attachment

Issued 3-17-77

Director's Survey of County Welfare Directors' Opinions
On Welfare Issues

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTH AND WELFARE
Department of Benefit Payments

October 1975

In answering the following questions, attach additional sheets of paper if necessary.

STATE/COUNTY RELATIONS

1. In seeking answers from units in DBP to problem areas:

a. Do you receive timely attention to your problems or questions?

	AFDC	Food Stamps	Adult Aids	Fiscal	Fair Hearings
Always	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Never	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Seldom	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Never	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

b. Are your contacts with DBP courteous and helpful?

	AFDC	Food Stamps	Adult Aids	Fiscal	Fair Hearings
Always	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Usually	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Seldom	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Never	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

- c. If there are unusual difficulties experienced by DBP in resolving your county's particular problems, do you receive timely acknowledgement as well as adequate follow-up communications?

	AFDC	Food Stamps	Adult Aids	Fiscal	Fair Hearings
Always	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Usually	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Seldom	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Never	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

2. What changes do you recommend in Benefit Payments county liaison structure to improve ongoing contact between the various program elements in Benefit Payments and county welfare departments?
3. Should the state play a larger or lesser role in the level of consultation and program supervision provided to counties?

	Food Stamp Program	AFDC Program	Adult Aid Programs	Other Functions	Fiscal
Yes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
No	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

4. Should the state take a greater or less active role in providing direct training to counties? If "yes" specify what area.
5. Recognizing that you are continually involved in working with and implementing regulations from several state departments, do you find adequate coordination between these departments as their programs interrelate and as this inter-relationship impacts your operations?

Always _____
Usually _____
Seldom _____
Never _____

COMMENTS:

6. How can DBP improve communications with county welfare directors?

WELFARE ISSUES/PUBLIC AND RECIPIENT SATISFACTION

7. Are county welfare directors, as a group, sufficiently briefed on state and national issues and proposals which have or may have local impact? If not, give suggestions for improvement.
8. What federal-level issues do you believe DBP should more aggressively pursue?
9. Do you favor state administration? If so, what is the single most overriding concern that results in your support of state administration?

10. It has been said that most welfare recipients who find jobs do so through their own initiative rather than through a job program. What changes do you believe might be made at the state and county levels to encourage such initiative and to make it bring better results for recipients and the welfare system?
11. Do Benefit Payments' information leaflets for recipients and the general public meet your needs? How could these publications be improved?
12. What steps, if any, should the state take to assist the counties in assuring reasonable client satisfaction with the welfare programs?
13. What steps, if any, should the state take to assure reasonable general public satisfaction with the welfare programs?

REGULATIONS

14. In regard to state-prepared regulations:

- a. Are regulations written in a manner that is clearly understandable to the level that must apply such regulations?

Always _____

Usually _____

Seldom _____

Never _____

COMMENTS:

15. Considering fiscal constraints, what changes in state regulations would do the most to let you better perform your job?

16. Considering fiscal constraints, what changes in state regulations would do the most to eliminate any irritating or discouraging experiences a client encounters in dealing with your department?

17. A task force with heavy county representation is now working on a section-by-section rewrite of the DBP regulations. The DBP goal is a manual which represents an effective tool for the line Eligibility Worker, i.e., informal language, examples, charts, etc. With this in mind, will you still feel the need for a county manual? What other changes in the DBP manual should be made?

OPERATIONS IMPROVEMENT/CORRECTIVE ACTION

18. Should the state go further in designing and requiring the operation of specific systems and procedures relative to a determination of eligibility and grant?

19. Would your county benefit from an increased state effort to aid you in improving written policy and procedural instructions for use at the eligibility worker level, including a greater emphasis on examples to illustrate particularly difficult policies and procedures?

Yes _____
 No _____
 Uncertain _____

COMMENTS:

20. Has your county been the subject of an Operations Improvement Study conducted by a team from DBP?

Yes _____
 No _____

- a. If "yes", has this effort been helpful to you in identifying systems problems and in taking corrective action?

Very much so _____
 Somewhat _____
 To a small extent _____
 Not at all _____

COMMENTS:

21. In light of the increased effort to reduce errors in welfare administration, has sufficient assistance been given to you by DBP to facilitate your own Corrective Action effort?

	<u>AFDC</u>	<u>Food Stamps</u>
Yes	_____	_____
No	_____	_____
Uncertain	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

22. What steps should be taken to improve present quality control corrective action procedures?

23. How do you feel about the effectiveness of earnings clearance system?

24. Are you satisfied with the fair hearings program as it is currently administered by the Department of Benefit Payments? If not, in what ways is it unsatisfactory?

25. What is your view with regard to alternative delivery systems for food stamps (over the counter, PAW, mail issuance)?

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

26. In what ways can we assist you in controlling your administrative costs?
27. To what extent will the closed-end allocation of AFDC administrative costs assist the county in the implementation of administrative efficiencies, and to what extent will it hamper the effectiveness of the county in reducing error rates?

OTHER

28. Two recently inaugurated efforts to which DBP is committed are controlling county administrative costs and regulation simplification. What other kinds of activities should receive a similar priority by DBP?

29. Please identify other areas of concern, suggestions, or comments that would help DBP be of better service to you: